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VACATIONS.

"Now my task is smoothly done;
I can fly or I can run."

THAT faithful teachers lead a life of some labor is quite true. No one should think of "waiting on teaching," who is disposed to indolence. This is true in spirit of many other employments as well as teaching. It is nowhere written on divine authority that "the hand of the *indolent* maketh rich."

It is a common remark among our brethren, that the business of teaching is burdensome and wearing. Many think it endangers the health; more are confident that it imposes an uncommon trial upon good temper. Hence those who have taught long, are apt to claim not a little credit for their extremely arduous service in a good cause. They may have been engaged in piloting babes through the alphabet, or in settling the principles of orthography; yet they speak of a half a score of years spent without intermission in pleading the cause of good letters, as if they had done some great thing. A minister of half a century would not repose on his laurels with nearly as much complacency. It is the peculiar trials of a teacher's life and the wearing nature of his employment that save *his* boasting from being vain. The truth is, the pedagogue has a slight longing for the glories of martyrdom, without enduring its fires.

At the same time we admit that teaching is hard; and teaching the youngest no less so than the more mature. Travelling in a flat country is said to be harder for beasts of draught than in a hilly district; for one set of muscles only is called

into action, and there is little interchange of exertion. So the constancy and sameness of the toil in the business of teaching make an unusual draft upon the power of endurance. To hear a recitation for an hour is frequently harder than to address a public audience for that length of time. When thus employed with a class we are quiescent, to be sure; and there appears no indication of great activity. But we must watch the progress of the recitation, observe every step; now correct a misstatement, now suggest an alteration; and in many cases govern a school-room at the same moment. Perhaps, as is, alas! too often the case, we must let patience have her perfect work amid great trials; we are compelled to listen to barbarisms in translation, or some "otherwise" in the mathematics that is enough "to stir a fever in the blood of age."

To maintain the attention, and keep the surface of things quiet, under these circumstances, requires no small effort, as all thorough teachers most certainly know. He who swings the scythe, does not labor so hard; a forest may be felled with less tiresome effort. And many kinds of mental labor, which all acknowledge to be exhausting, are really less wearing. It seems otherwise to the casual observer, we know. He makes no allowance for the inward exertion, the struggle to suppress emotion, the constantly sustained attention. Accustomed to judge of the amount of force by the immediate effect and noise produced, he deems that the "master" who only sits and *listens* from morning till noon must have an easy task. So teachers who *talk* a great deal in recitation (some such we are sorry to say there are) imagine that they perform the most labor. But it is often far otherwise. Those who make their *pupils* talk to a good purpose, perform far more.

It will be admitted, then, that the teacher's life is sufficiently laborious; if he be earnestly devoted to his work, it is exceedingly so. But are there no saving clauses? Is there no relief from this tedium? Must our burden be like Æsop's basket of stones, with a never diminishing weight? We think not. Few classes of laboring men are so highly favored as we. Is your labor hard, instructor? It continues but few hours in the day. Legislative enactments with regard to ten-hour systems, have little application to you.

By common practice you are confined to the school-room but little more than six hours of the twenty-four. Surely we can redeem enough from sleep in the remainder, both for bodily and mental recreation. Under these circumstances he is unfaithful to himself, who has not his hour for bodily exercise, and his hour too for self-improvement by converse with books.

But this is not all. Community does not require of us unintermitting toil. The wise men who went before us, have

decided (thanks to their memories) that the weight that gives motion to the machinery of our life, descends too certainly and rapidly to the earth; it must be drawn up again and our frames recruited by long seasons of relaxation from toil. Hence most teachers receive a furlough during ten weeks of the fifty-two. "It will soon be vacation," is the thought that supplies strength for many a day of labor. The consideration that our work is not to be long, will frequently render even an irksome task pleasant.

But, fellow teachers, are you spending your vacations as you ought? Ten weeks of the year are no small portion of time, of which to give account. Nearly one-fifth of your time, and that left entirely to your discretion, ought to tell effectually on your improvement as a teacher and a man. Allow us, then, to call your attention to this subject. We have often spoken of your duties when in the field of toil; let us now so far depart from the common track as to speak of your seasons of repose.

We say then, first, do not postpone the performance of a multitude of duties to vacation.

This is an almost universal practice; but it is as deceptive as it is common. Is a literary work to be read? Is a scientific treatise to be examined? Is some page of poetry to be perused? Nothing is more common than for scholastic men to fancy that in vacation there will be time for all these; till the vacation, like an over-laden boat, fairly sinks with its load. So much is assigned to be done, that nothing is really done. The case would be less hopeless, if a regular assignment of duties were made and plainly written down. But this is seldom the case; only every thing is delayed. Conscience is appeased for the neglect of duties now, because the consideration of them has been assigned to a future time; but long before that time arrives, memory, it may be, has betrayed her trust, and consequently the thing proposed to be done, is never done.

We believe the case is rare where more is not thus assigned to the weeks of vacation than could be done in that time. And teachers and students need hardly be reminded that weeks of recess always prove the shortest of the year. We say, then, what needs to be done, do now, and postpone to the vacation as little of proposed labor as possible.

Again, let not the season of vacation be an *idle* period. Many persons of studious habits relax all effort when the period of labor is over. The daily bell no longer calls. The confinement has been close; the recess and enlargement are equally grateful. Subjection to rules and periodic calls is followed by an independence of almost all rules. But, fellow teacher, we ask you to listen to no such suggestions of indolence; remember that a change of labor is often as effectual as rest from all labor. Do not think that all must be given to repose. The

body and the mind must be rested, it is very true, but all this may be accomplished, and still a portion of every day reserved for some page of the classics, some chapter of literary or historical reading, some sketch with pencil, something whereby the sources of pleasure shall be multiplied and our future usefulness increased.

At the commencement of the vacation *fix upon some rule*, reserve some corner of every day for self-improvement. Do you journey? it is well; but no journey will be less pleasant, even amidst the most exciting scenes, for one hour stolen from vanity and sight-seeing for the good of the intellectual part. Do you choose rather to linger at home? Let not sleep, as is too often the case, spread her mantle over all the precious hours of the morning. An hour of study, of self-improving application then, will throw a charm over every employment and travel of that day. Are you a proprietor of the soil, and do you spend the recess in the pursuits of agriculture? An excellent prologue for every day of such recreation will be to repeat the maxim, "Cultivate the soil and the mind." Remember that the earth will breathe a sweeter fragrance from its newly opened furrows and green vales, if you walk them with the feelings of a scholar as well as man.

Your vacation may be spent in *bodily labor* of various kinds, as the manner of some is. Let us remind you that fatiguing labor of any kind indisposes one to mental exertion. The bones become rheumatic from much unaccustomed toil, and one fancies that he is wholly tired, when it is only the body that complains. The mind has perhaps been looking out all day from the loopholes of her retreat, a perfectly silent spectator. In your indisposition to farther toil you will fancy, it is true, that aching bones and strained muscles can do no more; and so it may be. When the shadows begin to grow long on your labor, and point away to the east, it is time to rest. Be it after a day of travel or toil, the aching body now craves repose. But the mind is not rheumatic; it needs no respite. Where now is the pencil or the mathematical instruments, the page of literature, of poetry, of history? Seek the quiet corner of the lounge, or the luxury of the armchair, and while the body rests, put forth one effort more; peruse some charming or instructive page, some discovery of science. And before that day's experience is "rounded with a little sleep," let it be said that as an intellectual man you have "earned a night's repose."

Or, still better, be an *early riser* in vacation. Eastern nations worship the rising sun. We have been taught to condemn idolatry; but it would be hard to say whether the nations of the western world are better employed at that hour or not. Certain it is, that if most of the latter were to worship at the

hour of sunrise, they could only do it as some Mohammedans go to Mecca, that is, by proxy.

Do a wonderful thing, then ; anticipate the sun in your rising during your vacation, and give to prayer and to study,

“ The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due and sacred song.”

It is base to give up all the early day to indolence, and fringe the morning hours with such a wide border of sleep. If nature is exhausted, allow her deep potations of slumber ; there is no better medicine : but to this end retire early, and if necessary, set apart an hour “ to dumb forgetfulness,” at midday ; but wake with the birds and sun, and have at least one early, quiet hour for mental improvement ; so that whatever may befall, you may not be obliged to say at night, like the Roman Titus of old, “ I have lost a day ! ”

Be *regular* in your vacations. If you need repose, we have admitted the necessity of having it. But be systematic in your rest as well as in your work. Do not ingloriously abandon all the armor of life. If you have your seasons of recreation, have also, with as much certainty, at least some fragments of each day for study. Do not say that you have nothing to do. You have always a mind to improve, knowledge to increase, new views of truth to acquire, you have to keep yourself apace with the improvements of the age in which you live. No person living, to whom is addressed the command “ Be ye perfect,” can with truthfulness say, “ I have nothing to learn.” As a teacher, you would betray a sad deficiency by expressing such a sentiment. Have you no knowledge to acquire for your pupils as well as for yourself ?

Suppose you resolve that you will explain some verse of Scripture every morning of the next term, now a text embodying a historical incident, now some geographical fact, some ancient custom, some oriental peculiarity. How it will probably interest your pupils, and throw an air of new importance about the sacred volume ! Preparation for such an exercise may well be made now.

Do you set apart a little portion of every week for a conversation or lecture on some fact of history, or phenomenon of nature, or matter of common life ? If not, you little know how pleasing such an exercise may become. The number of subjects is of course endless ; the more common the topics, the more profitable the exercises may be ; for what so interesting as matters of the most familiar concern ? What pupil would it not interest, to know respecting the history of tea, and its mode of preparation ? Coffee will afford quite as much nourishment. No desk is without its illustrations of paper ; no window

without its glass, and so on through an almost endless variety of subjects. You will certainly do the state some service if you awaken in its future citizens, now before you, a new interest in such things, and teach them to glean knowledge in every field of ordinary toil and observation. They will never forget the information, and long years hence will thank you for it.

Let, then, no week pass without some exercise of this kind. The preparation is far easier than you suppose. Many Encyclopedias and other books published now, are full of the information you will need. The search for it will pay you well; it will increase your knowledge, and at the same time render you more acceptable as a teacher. Your business is not merely to brace the minds of your pupils by discipline (this is your principal work;) but to illuminate all their chambers with the light of knowledge. In vacation, then, you may well think of these things, and mark out some course you will pursue; make a list of subjects you will talk about, and collect the facts and group them ready for use. In this way, also, your vacations may be made to pay a rich tribute to the success of your future labors.

In any thing we have said, we would not imply that you are to neglect your health; that is a matter of the first importance, and must be attended to by rest, by exercise, by change of scene, by travel. But, in the midst of all, remember life's duties. Remember that you will replenish your strength all the more by retaining somewhat of the regularity and system of more laborious days. You are highly favored in being permitted thus, at frequently recurring intervals, to put off the harness. Few men of any profession are so highly favored. Teachers who complain much of the wearing nature of their employment, seldom think of this. But, respected friends, do not abuse your privileges; misspend not your vacations, and they will exert a powerful influence on coming terms. On the other hand, if your seasons of toil are well spent, you will have none but pleasant thoughts of approaching seasons of repose. When they arrive, one by one, can you but reflect that your work has been well done, the thought will give double sweetness to the respite. In the sweet pleasure of relief you can say, like John Milton, in the words of our motto,

"Now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly or I can run."

Light travels six millions of millions of miles in one year; yet it is supposed that not less than ten years are required for light to pass from the nearest fixed star to the earth.

SIR EDWARD COKE.

OUR March number contained a notice of Roger Ascham, one of England's worthies of the time of Queen Elizabeth. He has claims upon our respect as a schoolmaster; his writings will interest all scholars as a specimen of quaint but genuine English.

Cotemporary with him, was another, still more distinguished, Sir Edward Coke, born in 1550. He was distinguished as a lawyer; in the thirty-fifth year of Queen Elizabeth he was chosen speaker of the House of Commons. He passed through a succession of high offices. Soon after the accession of James I, he was knighted; but was less in favor with this sovereign than was Lord Bacon, his rival. His boldness in opposing the court, and prosecuting the minions of the king, made him enemies, and finally cost him his place and the favor of men in power. He, however, meanly made up this breach, by marrying his youngest daughter to a brother of Villiers, and was in a measure reinstated; not, however, so completely as to avoid a short visit to the Tower. His stay there was short; but thereafter he had little of the favor of James. Under Charles I, he enjoyed more of the royal clemency; and near the close of his career, was greatly distinguished, especially as a defender of popular rights. He died at Stoke Pogis in Buckinghamshire, in 1634, and left a fame as a great lawyer through all time.

His principal work is the Institutes of English Law, which, it is true, has no remarkable connection with the business of teaching. But there are some remarks in his chapter on the study of the law, that have, since we first saw them, seemed worthy of all praise, for their truth, and quaint and real beauty. Cicero remarks, in his most beautiful oration for the poet Archias, that all the sciences are connected together by a common bond; "*etenim omnes artes, quae ad humanitatem pertinent, habent quoddam commune vinculum, et quasi cognatione quadam inter se continentur.*"* So there is much, even in the study of the law, that may instruct, and will certainly deeply interest one of our calling. It is wonderful what mines of literary wealth there are in the works of many of these ancient writers. And they seem to us to be none the less beautiful for being somewhat antique. It is a hopeful sign if these ancient treasures are beginning to be sought unto. But we dislike to see them in a modern dress. It is like handing Abraham and the patriarchs over to a modern tailor. We prefer to see the

* For all the arts which pertain to a liberal training, have a certain common bond, and are held together, as it were, by some relationship among themselves.

gem in its ancient setting. Give us Lord Bacon, for instance, in a volume that is somewhat mouse-eared, and abounds in parentheses from the moths; and John Flavel, in his own veritable folios, half as long as their author.

In the extract which we give, there are truly noble sentiments, which are as applicable to the school-room as the court-room. We would that all teachers and pupils might never forget, that "the *reason* of the law is the life of the law;" and that "he is happy who has been able to learn the *causes* of things;" *felix qui potuit causas rerum cognoscere!*

"Reason is the life of the law, nay, the common law itself is nothing but reason, which is to be understood of an artificial perfection of reason, gotten by long study, observation and experience, and not of every man's natural reason; for *nemo nascitur artifex*.* This legal reason *est summa ratio*.† And therefore, if all the reason that is dispensed into so many several heads were united into one, yet could he not make such a law as the law of England is; because by many successions of ages, it hath been fined and refined by an infinite number of grave and learned men, and by long experience grown to such a perfection for the government of this realm as the old rule may justly be verified of it, *Neminem oportet esse sapientiores legibus*: that is, no man (out of his own private reason) ought to be wiser than the law, which is the perfection of reason.

"*Ratio est anima legis*; ‡ for then are we said to know the law, when we apprehend the reason of the law; when we bring the reason of the law so to our own reason, that we perfectly understand it as our own, and then, and never before, we have such an excellent and inseparable property and ownership therein, as we can neither lose it, nor any man take it from us, and as will direct us, (the learning of the law is so chained together,) in many other cases. But, if by your study and industry, you make not the reason of the law your own, it is not possible for you long to retain it in your memory.

"The reason of the law is the life of the law, for though a man can tell the law, yet if he know not the reason thereof, he shall soon forget his superficial knowledge. But when he findeth the right reason of the law, and so bringeth it to his natural reason, that he comprehendeth it as his own, this will not only serve him for the understanding of that particular, but of many others; for *cognitio legis est copulata et complicata*, § and this knowledge will long remain with him.

"Our student shall observe that the knowledge of the law is

* No one is born an artist.

† Is the highest reason.

‡ Reason is the life of the law.

§ The knowledge of the law is manifold and complicated.

like a deep well, out of which each one draweth according to the strength of his understanding. He that reacheth deepest, seeth the amiable and admirable secrets of the law, wherein I assure you the sages of the law in former times have had the deepest reach. And as the bucket in the well is easily drawn to the uppermost part of the water (for *nullum elementum in suo proprio loco est grave*;) * but take it from the water, and it cannot be drawn up but with great difficulty; so, albeit the beginnings of this study seem difficult, yet, when the professor of the law can dive into the depths, it is delightful, easy, and without heavy burden, so long as he keep himself in his own proper element."

And farther on, our good author observes: "Littleton often saith '*And the cause is,*' which is worthy of observation; for then are we truly said to know anything, when we know the true cause thereof. *Felix qui potuit causas rerum cognoscere.*"

"There be three kinds of unhappy men:

"*Qui scit et non docet*; he that hath knowledge and teacheth not.

"*Qui docet et non vivit*; he that teacheth and liveth not thereafter.

"*Qui nescit et non interrogat*; he that knoweth not and doth not enquire to understand."

A NEW WAY TO HAVE A LIBRARY.—We heard a teacher narrating the following incident. He had in his school a young man from one of the Canadian provinces, who had enjoyed no early advantages for learning, and who now, though just entering manhood, was resolutely determined to make amends for the misfortunes and defects of the past. He was one day meanly derided by one of the precocious pupils, found in every school-room, for some little mistake that betrayed his former ignorance. Turning to the self-confident lad, he briefly expressed his opinion of him thus: "*Isaac, what you do n't know would make a very thick book!*"

Engrave everywhere upon the mind of your pupil the noble remark of Lord Coke, "*The reason of the law is the life of the law.*"

"Then if one's own heart is at ease, sunshine is happiness itself."

* No element in its own place is burdensome.

LABOR WORSHIP.

BY EDWARD YOUL.

"Laborare est orare." *

DAYS and nights not given to service,
 Turn thy life to sinful waste ;
 Be no laggard, be no sluggard,
 Live not like a man disgraced.

See, creation never resteth ;
 Ever God creates anew ;
 To be like him, is to labor ;
 To adore him, is to do.

Do thy best, and do it bravely ;
 Never flag with under-zeal ;
 This is writ, as scriptures holy,
 "Thou must either work or steal."

None have mandate to be idle,
 Folded hands are vilest crime ;
 God's command is, "Labor, worship,
 In thy youth and in thy prime."

Pray, "The early rain and the latter,
 Lord, withhold not from our toil ;
 Fructify the seed we scatter
 With this worship in the soil."

Ever idleness blasphemeth,
 In its prayer, in its praise ;
 How shall Heaven accept his incense,
 Who is idle all his days ?

Be a workman, oh my brother !
 Trust not worship to the tongue ;
 Pray with strenuous self-exertion ;
 Best by hands are anthems sung !

The atmosphere, the light, the earth, the grass, the falling leaves, when they have been, as it were, carved into shapes of beauty by our studies, will ever after stand by us like angels, and suggest pleasant thoughts to us amidst the dull cares of life.

* Some of our readers may have doubts respecting the orthodoxy of this poem, especially of the motto, *To labor is to pray*. We confess as much. Whether the author refers to *such* prayer as

"climbs the ladder Jacob saw,"

or not, we cannot tell. With this qualification or without, we do not think it will injure any one. Its ideas respecting *work* are evidently calculated for places on this meridian." Teachers work as faithfully as any one ; why should they not read this poem ?

AN OBSTACLE TO IMPROVEMENT.

"Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil."—*Young*.

REGULARITY and punctuality of attendance are in the highest degree desirable. The reports of some schools within our knowledge are exceedingly favorable in this respect. The names of many pupils are reported, who are never absent, never late. This reminds one of a millennial age in teaching. But such cases are rare. People now-a-days are so anxious to obey the apostolic injunction and "prove all things," that frequently we must not expect to have the same pupils under our care longer than a few months, and perhaps a few weeks. This is eminently true of many of our higher seminaries. It seems to be not less so of many of our common schools; for although the pupils may not change, the teachers do; which is productive of even more disastrous effects.

Not unfrequently every successive term brings a new incumbent to office. Whether this be done because the former teacher is deemed unfit, or because the committee-men have a diffidence about retaining a good teacher, and so depriving the rest of the world of his services, does not plainly appear.

We cannot be held responsible for impossibilities. We think that six months, or even a year, and that of uninterrupted attendance, is short time enough, (nay, too short,) to make deep and lasting impressions upon the mind of the scholar. What shall be done in every case we cannot tell. Certainly the teacher, as the first thing, should earnestly desire to have it otherwise. His most earnest efforts should be turned in that direction. If, as in many of our higher seminaries, it results from the shortness of the terms and the changing nature of the school, he can do little. He must heat the iron as hot as he can in a short time, and strike hard and fast. Perhaps he will appear to lose all his labor; and it may be, on the other hand, that impressions of surpassing beauty will be made even in that short time, which will be to his praise and honor hereafter. That teacher has much need of faith. He may well for his encouragement remember the words of Scripture, "In the morning sow thy seed; in the evening withhold not thy hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, this or that."

If the difficulty we speak of proceeds from frequent change of place in the teacher, we of course can suggest no remedy, so far as it is the fault of others. It is truly sad that any of our calling should be so much like certain observances in the Episcopal Church, called "movable feasts." A rolling stone gathers no moss; so a teacher that is constantly moving, has

little prospect of benefiting others or enriching himself. But we should not be blind to the fact that quite a large portion of the schools of New England are still taught in this way. We would not say a word to discourage teachers thus employed. Past experience proves that much can be done. Such persons have *some* advantages; they have no antipathies in pupils to conquer; they do not usually commence their labors after a vacation, the weeks of which have been hardly sufficient to recruit an exhausted frame. He is a poor teacher who, when brought in contact with a group of pupils, for a single term even, with all the disadvantages suggested, does not accomplish much, and erect a monument more lasting than stone.

But there is another difficulty; it is a great irregularity and want of punctuality in pupils. Even these short periods of attendance we have spoken of, are broken by many a long parenthesis for genteel amusements, and for housework. How many cases of comfortable sickness! How pressing is the labor of the farm! What long errands to the shoemaker or store! How tardily the congress of youthful delegates from the kitchens and barns of the village, assemble on a winter's morning! The truthful parent fancies that a delay of a few minutes can make but little difference. And alas! he reasons too correctly; for if his child is habitually late, it makes indeed little difference whether or not he is there at all.

What can be done? The teacher has no authority to command attendance. He has no magnetism to quicken the lingering footsteps, and draw in the reluctant pupil to his task. What can he do? The evil is a great one; no school, no pupil can prosper, if habitually tardy or irregular. Every late footstep is giving a lesson to future life; tardy scholars will certainly make tardy men. But what course shall the teacher pursue?

In the first place let him deprecate the evil. Again, let him *not worry* over it, or indeed over any thing else; worrying shortens more lives than intemperance or the sword. Let him be invariably prompt himself; actions speak louder than words. Let him keep a careful record of all tardinesses and absences, and call the attention of the school to them. If circumstances permit him to exercise authority, let him do it. At least let him keep a careful record of these matters and show the offenders how they look on paper. One prevailing fault of teachers is a neglect of keeping an account with their school. A fair and well-kept record of all irregularities of attendance, and of the character of recitations, will be of as great service in school-keeping as a system of maps in geography.

Let the teacher, if possible, kindle some *ambition* to be punctual among the members of the school; the cure is nearly

effected then. If this be not attainable, let the matter be referred to the parents, at their homes, or on a meeting of the district. Show them that this is a question in "loss and gain." Show them that an absence of one day in the week will take away one half the benefit of the term. Show them that a tardiness of one half hour each session, will in an ordinary term make eleven or twelve days, and result in a loss of eleven twelfths of the expected gain, besides entailing upon them the odious habit of being forever a little after the time.

We doubt not that with such representations you would rouse at home a disposition to coöperate with you. Can you accomplish this, and effect a reform, you may reckon it one of the noblest fruits of your labor for your pupils. Punctuality is the life of business. Lord Nelson remarked that he owed much of his success in life, to the fact, that he had made it a rule to be always fifteen minutes before the time.

But if scholars, after all, will be transient, and your pupils and their parents cannot be reformed, "fret not thyself in any wise to do evil." We know not what others may advise; but we recommend that such pupils be referred at once to the "committee on unfinished business," and as soon as possible to the "committee on foreign relations!"

WHAT IS DONE, HAVE WELL DONE.

"Work once well done, is twice done."

MUCH of our instruction lacks that vigor of discipline, and the nerve, and *persistency*, that will entitle us to future remembrance.

Would you, O teacher, be long remembered? Then do this day's work well. Are you employed with the youngest class of pupils? Then so much the more important your work; for on the solidity of the foundation depends the permanency of the whole. Are you daguerreotyping the numeration table or the columns of addition, on the mind of a pupil or a class? Do it well, oh, we beseech you! do it well. Let no man have the honor of doing that work after you. Be daunted by no discouragements. If the sun goes down while you are clambering over the first unit's figure, then let the night rest only on a parenthesis in your labor. Let the morrow find you engaged in the same toilsome ascent, dragging up your pupil after you. And if *many* suns rise and set before the end is attained, still resolve that it *shall be done*.

And so through all the departments of instruction. Resolve that this thing shall be learned, that principle shall be understood, that intricate places shall be cleared up; and let it be known that from your decisions there is no appeal; and that any attempt to overleap or evade your will, is just as futile as haggling with the decrees of fate.

Do not understand us to refer by this to any pestering particularity, which some teachers mistake for thoroughness. They will tell you of a dozen ways to prove simple subtraction, and make their pupils perform a perfect incubation for a week over a pair of Arabic figures to hatch out some new relation. All this may be good for an Encyclopedia, but it is not in place in the school-room. We refer merely to a practical and thorough knowledge of any given rule or process; and this the pupil should have just so far as he extends his explorations. Is it a page of the classics? let not your pupil turn over another leaf, till he can construe it as rapidly as his mother tongue. Literal and rapid translation is the best rule of prosody. Is it bank discount? let him not dismiss that theme till he can write a note and obtain an endorser, and manage his "days of grace," and *tell* how he does it too, as knowingly as one who walks up the steps of a bank to obtain a loan.

If this has not been the way in which you have shaded your pictures heretofore, then, fellow teachers, when you next go to your school-room, we ask you to put your determination to have it so, in the imperative mood. Without one word of fretfulness, or any offensive show of authority; with nothing on your part but clear ideas and an inflexible will, your pupils will soon know what vigorous discipline means.

And oh! never forget that this discipline we speak of, to be serviceable, must be expended upon the reason, and not upon the memory. The fault of past instruction has been, not, perhaps, that it cultivated the memory too much, but the thinking powers too little. Would you, therefore, benefit your pupils? teach them how to think, how to analyze and reflect. Make every process a reasoning, reflective process. For this purpose you will rely mostly on the mathematical branches; for as Lord Bacon says, "If a man's wits be wandering, let him study the mathematics;" and for the mass of pupils, arithmetic will take the precedence of every other branch.

In this study, then, as indeed in every other, have done forever with that careless, rapid way, that proves nothing, knows nothing, only that "the rule says so." Never take the pupil's assertion that he understands this part or that. Nothing is more deceptive. Human nature does not love the labor of patient thought. Hence the shifts and subterfuges that the pupil will resort to, to avoid the trial, are endless.

Stand up in your firm determination, and see that the pupil perceives the *wherefore* at every step, and *gives it unasked*. Let every process be reasoned out; let every dark passage be threaded through and through, till the footsteps fall with unfeeling confidence in the blindest part. This may be hard for the teacher, and hard for the taught; but there is no excellence without great labor. If the pupil recoils, hold him firmly to the work. If the parent interferes, tell him, as Ceres told the father of Triptolemus of old, "Unless I hold your son in the flame and bury in him coals of fire, I cannot make him wholly immortal."

We say again, it is hard. It is this that leads the good teacher often to say, "Who is sufficient for these things?" And any thing but an indomitable will, will sometimes yield. But if you are endeavoring to invigorate your pupil with the power of consecutive thought, you are in the right. And whoever may doubt, whoever may deride, whoever may oppose, persevere; consider it as your "mission," to wake up human souls to the ability and luxury of thought. Tire not; but every day march all your forces against the castle of indolence in the soul, and with your blows as heavy as sledge-hammers, demonstrate on its never opened doors the wonderful proposition to them, that the powers that sleep therein, are capable of a few moments of unbroken wakefulness. It is thus that we expect to give perpetuity to our work.

"'Tis thus that painters write their names at Co!"

You might punctuate the whole earth with pyramids and obelisks, and furrow out Amazons with the point of your cane, and your work would not be so permanent as this. True, your fame or reward may not be present; community may compensate you but poorly; your pupils even may not esteem you *now*. But it was a noble remark of Kepler, "God has waited six thousand years for a beholder; cannot Kepler wait a few years for a reader?" It has been the way with the world's best heroes, to go through scenes of fiery trial, and then suffer an early apotheosis for want of bread.

"Seven cities fought for Homer dead,
Through which, Homer living, begged his bread."

Nevertheless, the good teacher is one of society's best and most permanent benefactors. Then, fellow laborers, linger here over this thought, and learn the sustaining lesson, taught in the school of the glorious prophets and martyrs, and heroes of all time:

"Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait."

SHALL WE TEACH UNTIL OLD AGE?

"Si Dominus voluerit, et vivamus."—James 4, 15.

It is the reproach of our business as teachers, that so many abandon it after a little trial. It proves a stepping-stone to almost every other preferment. Candidates for the law and ministry generally pass through it on the way to the pulpit and bar. It is believed that we also qualify as many for the service of Æsculapius as all our colleges. It is the scope of the three professions to minister to distresses of mind, estate and body, and primarily to relieve them. But it is strongly to be suspected that entanglements of either kind sometimes suffer like the case of the woman mentioned in Scripture, who from much professional advice, grew "nothing better, but rather worse."

The inference is, that many in the so-called learned professions would better have stayed in their early employment, where there is thought to be more chance of doing good and less of doing harm. It has been said of the three professions, what we believe cannot be said of teaching, that they are founded on the sin of Adam. It might be one of the "difficult points of the law," and probably would need a "consultation" of doctors; but it could not but be profitable to inquire how far they tend to perpetuate the effects of it.

Many consider our business, like the State of Vermont, a good state to migrate from. In addition to the contributions we make to the learned professions, our "alumni" are to be found pursuing every calling. There is hardly a farmer, but what has sown the seeds of knowledge; not a son of Vulcan, but what has sought to "rivet" the attention of wayward youth to the unwelcome business of the school-room; and we presume not a member of the "ordnance department," even, but what has taught "the young idea how to shoot," at least one term. Our country is perfectly safe, if its safety depends merely upon the school-master's being "abroad."

But this is not the full extent of our loss. A large proportion of our teachers in this State, where the pilgrims landed, are females. Not a year passes without witnessing the defection of many of these. They go, but never return. They hardly begin to plant the seeds of truth, when they are found "conjugating the verb *to love*," and in the next paper they advertise a family school. The case is hopeless; no increase of pay or any remedy can reach the disorder. And what is most singular, considering the great love many profess for teaching, we never knew a patient *feel badly about it*, even when the progress of the disorder is most rapid. Thousands are thus cut off from our ranks every year.

We seriously suggest whether or not this matter should be referred to the legislature another session, and a bill be reported by the committee on education against it. But any pains and penalties enacted in this matter, must lie against the clerical profession also ; for of the multitudes who have disappeared in this way, scarcely one has been "executed without the benefit of a priest."

But these remarks do not answer the question which was proposed at the head of this article ; they only show, by way of plainest inference, that many of our number will *not* remain in the calling until old age. But there are others, a goodly number, who are, in the strict sense, professional teachers ; they have been long in the profession, and seem likely to continue. Many of them, we are sorry to know, are still in the singular number ; but if they ever decline the paradigm of life as far as the plural, it will in their case involve no change in relation to their calling. The ranks of those who are interested in the business of education will not in such a desirable event necessarily lose one by subtraction, but we hope gain one by the opposite rule. To such we speak, and also to those who are from time to time entering our ranks ; shall we teach until old age ?

In replying to this inquiry, we would preface every remark with the words of our motto: "*Si Dominus voluerit et vivamus, faciemus hoc aut illud.*"

And as we, most of us, eat at the public crib, we must employ the sign of the subjunctive mood once more, and say also, that we will do this or that, *if* community seems to need us. It will be well for us to remember, that if we do not continue faithful, and indeed become more faithful, that most worthy body, the public, whom we serve and live upon, may pity our miseries, and give us leave of absence much sooner than we wish.

We say again, shall we continue in our present calling while we have strength ? or shall we have devoted to it the years of our inexperience and indiscretion, and then abandon it ? Will one marry a rich wife, and so "take orders" for a life of laziness ? Will one become a farmer, and another a merchant ? Will one become a doctor, and so save people from the trouble of going

"The roundabout way to the world below ?"

Why have we so few grey-haired men in our ranks ? Is it for the same reason that there are but few aged citizens in unhealthy districts ? Are our brethren and fathers all worn out before the almond-tree begins to flourish ? Or are they obliged to abandon the business because community rejects the counsel of the old men, like Rehoboam of old ? Or is it more probably

the case, that teachers themselves become tired of the business, and find that other employments hold out greater inducements of ease or profit? Whatever may be the reason, it is an unfortunate fact that it is so. It is hard to elevate any business if its own followers despise it. When at New Bedford, last fall, we noticed the youthful character of the Massachusetts Association, we were forcibly impressed with the thought, that either most teachers die young, or they find their business an excellent stepping-stone to something else. In all this there is a silent condemnation of the pursuit; actions speak more forcibly than mere words.

Why is it, brethren? Is not our business a good one? What says Socrates? "No man goeth about a more goodly purpose, than he that is mindful of the good bringing up, both of his own and other men's children." If it is good for the morning, is it not also good for the meridian and the twilight of life? There is nothing in its effect upon the health, that need make us disdain it as soon as we pass the zenith. One might have a clear head, and be at peace with his stomach in the practice of pedagogy till the age of the patriarchs, for aught we know.

Or is the effect upon your mind and heart, bad? Does pedagogy asperate your temper, brother? Are you afraid to venture amid the infirmities of old age with the irritations and labors of this business upon you? We would have you think otherwise. We would have you nobly conquer yourself; "he that ruleth his own spirit, is better than he that taketh a city;" be not irritated; let every year that passes over you, witness a higher degree of self-control; bear life's burdens patiently. Let a longer experience only fit you more perfectly for the discharge of your duty. Grow yearly in knowledge; advance even-paced with the progressing age. Be more and more young and happy in spirit (as you may) as you "see the day approaching." And if you are spared till the shadows grow long; if nature and providence sift down the snows of a ripe old age upon you, we are persuaded that you will not regret the choice. So far as this world is concerned, you will without doubt look back on duties well performed; a life has been well spent. Many will have grown up in the light of your examples; multitudes will thank you for faithful instruction and encouraging words. This will be better to you than wealth or popular applause; it will, so far as worldly considerations can, cheer the evening of life, and breathe

"A delicate fragrance, comforting to the soul."

What we speak of is not impossible; for we have venerable teachers among us, to whom we look with reverence, all

the greater, from the fact that they stand almost alone. Homer speaks of Nestor, at the time of the Trojan war, as having survived two generations of men, and living then among the third. These fathers of whom we speak, have survived even more generations of teachers. As the wave of youthful influence has ebbed and flowed around them, they have found themselves increasingly happy, and we believe, increasingly useful. We think of them with respect; we trust they may live long to bear the burdens of their calling, as well as to reap the fruits of their many well-spent years. We honor their choice of teaching as a permanent profession; we can hope for this brief article no more success, than that it may induce some who are now young, to imitate their example.

For ourselves and for the cause of education, we earnestly address every venerable teacher, in the words of the Latin poet to Cæsar Augustus,

"Serus in coelum redeas!" *

LENGTH OF RECITATIONS.

How much time do you spend in recitation? Many teachers spend an hour. Others, and especially those who have large schools and few or no helpers, devote much less. We well remember the time when in the early days of our teaching we thought ourselves fortunate if we could redeem even fifteen minutes from distraction for a class. With this allowance we felt ourselves very much cramped, and could never rise from the recitation feeling that we had done justice to our pupils or the subject. We naturally felt that those were highly favored who could devote one spacious and roomy hour to a single exercise.

But experience has taught us many things. And we write this article to suggest what has become our later impression on this subject. It is simply this, that a long recitation is not necessarily better than a short one. They who are pressed for time, enjoy some advantages from the very necessity of the case. They must be punctual in commencing, they must be prompt in conducting the exercise; they can allow little time for ignorance to plan a concealment or escape; they cannot deliberate long upon a doubtful lesson; they will not be likely to use great circumlocution in telling a class that their work is a failure and must be tried again. Such teachers will also have little time to talk; the pupils will need it all. These are certainly *some* of the characteristics of a good recitation.

On the other hand, although much time is desirable, the very

* Late may you return to heaven.

fact that there is no necessity to hurry, will with many teachers beget a tardiness on commencing, a lack of stir and animation in the progress of the exercise, which are by no means characteristic of the most profitable mode. The great fault will be, that the pupils will have time to hesitate, to learn or attempt to learn, when they should only *recite*. If the teacher is not at all restricted in time, how strong the temptation to yield to this pernicious habit, and accept from the scholar workmanship that lacks the last touch and finish of the perfect scholar! If it is the Mathematics, the pupil will need a little time to calculate upon the mode of solving the question, when his business now is simply to *do* it. The calculation should have been made before. If it is a recitation in the classics, the pupil will be suffered to indulge the fancy that it is enough to obtain an idea of his author's meaning, without clothing that idea in English terms. He must pronounce many words before he translates them. He must with considerable stammering pick out from a company of English synonyms, the one that is on the whole thought best for his use; as a poor trader fumbles in his drawer for the coin that will best make "change."

All this pronunciation of separate words, this stammering and hesitation, should have been when the lesson was learned, or rather not learned; and anything that will induce the teacher to say at once, "*My time is precious; I have not leisure for such work,*" will be a mercy to the pupil. Under such circumstances, dear teacher, learn to say to your pupils, "*Learn your lesson again; when you are ready to recite, I shall have time to hear; a few minutes will do for a perfect lesson; a whole day is not long enough for a poor one.*"

If pupils fail in preparation, it is the way with some instructors, to multiply explanations, and by much question-asking and talking on their part, eke out a very respectable exercise. This is the worst treason. It fosters in the scholar the idea that his lesson is learned, when he has not begun to learn it. The design of recitation is two-fold: to ascertain if the task assigned has been performed; and give appointments and needful explanations for the next. When you are well assured that the work has or has not been well performed, you have accomplished the principal purpose of the meeting. Whether you have been in your place five minutes or fifty, why linger longer, except to appoint and explain for the next effort?

We will not continue these remarks farther, lest we weary you and slide into the very fault we condemn. We have no objection to your spending a whole day in hearing a lesson, if you choose; it is well to explain much to pupils and have them review and repeat. If you will only be prompt and thorough, and not conduct your recitations to a *tiresome* length, it matters

little how long they are. But the inference we desire from all these remarks is, that for most classes and teachers, a recitation of thirty minutes is better than an hour.

THE GOOD NIGHT OF THE BIRDS.

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

It was a sabbath evening,
In spring's most glorious time,
When tree and shrub and early flower,
Were in their fragrant prime ;
And when the cloudless sun declined,
A glow of light serene,
A blessing on the world he left,
Came floating on the scene.

Then from the fragrant hedge-row,
A gentle descant stole,
And with its tide of melody,
Dissolved the listening soul.
The tenants of that leafy lodge,
Each in its downy nest,
Poured forth a fond and sweet "good night,"
Before they sunk to rest.

That tender parting carol,
How wild it was, and deep,
And then with soft harmonious close,
It melted into sleep.
Methought in yonder land of praise,
Which faith delights to view,
True-hearted, peaceful worshippers,
There would be room for you.

Ye give us many a lesson
Of music high and rare,
Sweet teachers of the lays of heaven,
Say, will ye not be there ?
Ye have no sins like ours to purge
With penitential dew :
Oh, in the clime of perfect love,
Is there no place for you ?

Ours is a world,

"Where living things and things inanimate
Do speak, at Heaven's command, to eye and ear."

AGRICULTURE.

"Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough!"

HAVE you a small farm? Perhaps yours is the happy lot of those who have obeyed the fifth commandment, and are receiving the reward of filial obedience; it may be that you "live long upon the land" left you by honored sires. Horace, the Roman poet, speaks most charmingly of those who cultivate paternal acres.* There is nothing pleasanter than that the same lands, and the same hearth-stone, should pass down from sire to son. There is nothing pleasanter than to pitch our tent on the ground where our fathers lived, and labored, and prayed, and from which, when it was their time to die, they went up to "seats prepared above." The very soil has the "smell of a field that the Lord hath blessed."

Or if such be not the history of your abode, it may be that you have set up your household gods under a purchased oak, and are still the fortunate owner of some part of the map of the world. If not, it may be that around the spot, where like Paul at Rome, you live in your "own hired house," there are a few rented acres, where you can imitate the example of Cincinnatus, and follow "the sacred plough." We hope that you are in some way connected with agriculture, and smell the fragrance of newly ploughed earth. Nature or art advertises no better medicine. Brutus of old showed that he was no fool, by falling down upon the earth, and acknowledging with a kiss, that she was his mother. The earth is the common mother of us all. From her prolific womb we sprang in the beginning; on her green and fruitful bosom we were cradled in our infancy, and have been nourished to manhood. The earth supports us; "the king himself is served by the field."

But it is not merely that the earth gives us food and support; it is, in an eminent sense, the source of *health*. It is said of one of the ancient giants, that he was strong only when he *touched the earth*. Hercules perceiving this, lifted him up in his powerful gripe till his feet no longer felt the ground, when he was weak as other men, and was easily slain. There is as much medical wisdom in this simple story, as in a doctor. Would we be well? We must escape the confinement of the school-room, and study, and the aristocracy of brick walls and pavements, and go to the earth, whose children we are; from whose bosom we came in the beginning, and to whose bosom we shall return

* "Beatus ille, qui procul negotiis,
Ut prisca gens mortalium,
Paterna rura bobus exerceat suis."

Happy the man, who far from troublesome business, like the ancient race of mortals, cultivates with his oxen, paternal lands.

again for a long and quiet sleep, when we are "weary with the march of life." How many disorders, for which we now torture chemistry, and ransack the botany of foreign climes, in search of medicine, would be healed by an attention to agriculture! We ourselves were once sick; the pathway of life seemed to diverge for a long season down from the hills of youth and health, and draw very near to the "house appointed for all the living;" long and dark shadows from the future, unseen world, fell upon our road; but we cried like the Psalmist, "Take me not away in the midst of my days!" As a means of restoration, our feet were soon directed back to the "paternal acres," of which we have spoken; and, (we are always grateful to remember,) a change for the better soon took place. Many years have since been added to our life, for which, it is true, the world has no particular occasion to give thanks; but we should be ungrateful, indeed, did we not remember, and often acknowledge our obligations to the business of agriculture.

What it proved to us, it has in many instances proved to others. For health, for long life, for true independence, there is no business like the cultivation of the soil. Would you preserve your health? we ask you in some way, though it may be limited, to remember the pursuits of farming. Are you sick or languid? seek the open air; cultivate some branch of natural science; become interested in growing plants; pay a sisterly visit to the garden at sunrise, like mother Eve; handle the hoe, and rake, and plough, and you will soon see the wisdom of the Creator in placing our first parents, that they might be always healthy and happy, amid the attractions of rural life.

But it is not merely for yourself that you are to regard this. A large portion of those you teach, are either to follow the plough, or to be the light and joy of the homes of husbandmen. Have you nothing to do for them? can you exert no influence which shall prepare them for the better discharge of the duties of future life? We mistake greatly if you cannot; either your influence is much less than we suppose, or you are powerless on this subject alone. You can *speck most favorably* of a business which must occupy the future life of so many of your pupils, and which God and good men have so signally honored.

"In ancient times, the sacred plough employed
The kings, and awful fathers of mankind."

You can give much *instruction*, that shall bear favorably on the interest of the farm. This applies especially to those who teach in our higher seminaries. There is not a science but what may be made to illustrate the principles of farming. How rich the science of chemistry is, for instance, in disclosures upon this subject! Let not the future farmer remain entirely

ignorant of these things. Let him be assured that he will need all these aids ; that there is no business that affords scope for more varied and extensive knowledge than farming.

You can also *direct* those who are inquiring for a pursuit in life, to this most substantial and independent occupation. Your pupils are placed under your care at the forming period of life. Have you no care with regard to their future pursuit ? Shall they fall in with the common impression, that all the success of life consists in avoiding its brown hands and hard work ? Shall one ingraft himself on to the association of gentlemen-drones, and follow a cigar through life ? Shall one become a vagabond agent ? Shall another intrench himself over some country store, and pull the teeth of society ? Shall another after a few weeks of study take the degree of physic, and during the rest of his life, make unoffending society take the physic itself ? Shall another still become a merchant, and strangle himself with his first invoice of cotton tape ? No, dear friends ; so far as you can, inspire more sensible ideas in your pupils ; teach them that he is the best "gentleman," who *does* the most for society ; that brown hands and a sweaty face are no disrepute. We sincerely thank the poet for this picture ;

" His face is like the tan,
His brow is wet with honest sweat ;
He earns whate'er he can,
And looks the whole world in the face,
For he owes not any man."

To the ladies, who form so large a part of our number, we need scarcely say a word upon this subject. We look upon ourselves as sure of their influence in every good cause ; without it we can do little. We appeal to them in behalf of the farmers ; in hopes that those who have so much to do in giving complexion to the tastes and pursuits of coming life, will not be unmindful of the claims of this large and respectable class. We shall not appeal in vain ; for we believe that no sentiment is more common among the sex, that that of the old king Uzziah, spoken of in the second of Chronicles ; "for he loved husbandry." For women, we think husbandry the most engaging business in the world.

May we not then, fellow teachers, ask your attention to this matter ? Speak a good word for this most noble occupation ; adapt your instructions to it so far as you can ; the time may not be and we hope is not far distant, when we shall have text-books with reference to this very subject. The great business of the school-room, it is true, is to learn how to learn, and to cultivate the thinking powers ; but we can also convey much knowledge and prepare the pupil to some extent for the practical duties of

future life. Why is not a knowledge of the soils and the food and growth of plants as useful and proper as the shape of New Holland and the librations of the moon? Endeavor to form a taste for these pursuits; surround your school-rooms with flowers and plants and trees; at least, let the air of summer winnow in at the open casement, through geraniums and creeping vines. In these various ways and others, you can do much for agriculture, and serve a good cause.

And when from long labor your strength fails, or the public will charitably release you from the school-room, make yourselves life-members of the society of farmers. Remember the wise words of the son of Sirach in the Apochrypha; "Despise not laborious work and husbandry, which the Most High hath ordained."

HOW DO YOU TEACH ARITHMETIC?

He that has to do with young scholars, especially in mathematics, may perceive how their minds open by degrees, and how it is exercise alone that opens them.—*Locke.*

It is our belief that for most pupils in our schools there is no study more important than Arithmetic. Every succeeding year of our experience as teachers has only raised the estimate we have placed upon it. Mathematical branches of some kind cannot be dispensed with in the business of instruction. For the patient application of thought and for vigorous training, we have no other branch that will supply their places. But to these branches we know of no other practicable introduction than Arithmetic. Hence we have long thought that if pupils do not learn Arithmetic well, they will not become well versed in the higher mathematics, and if they fail of the wholesome and needful discipline of these severe studies, they will be very sure to lack some of the qualities of a well-cultivated mind.

A very, very large proportion of the pupils of our State will not usually pass higher in mathematical training than a thorough knowledge of mental and written Arithmetic. We know indeed that many will pass on *farther*; but of the hundreds who have entered their names for Algebra within our immediate observation, we have not found scores or even tens that exhibited the marks of good training in Arithmetic. Our suggestion to such pupils has generally been, "You will make the most rapid progress by going immediately back."

It is nearly lost time for such pupils to attend to any higher branch. The foundation is not laid, and where is the possible use of erecting a superstructure?

Our suggestion to teachers therefore is, that much of their usefulness to their pupils will depend upon their mode of teaching Arithmetic. It may be taught so as to be no more potential as a discipline than the Catechism: on the other hand, it may be so managed that it shall act like a specific in awakening the power of thought. The result of our observation is, that if pupils pass through common Arithmetic well, they will pass through every other branch of study well.

How do you teach Arithmetic then? Do you allow your pupils to work the problems and bring them to you and exhibit the answers as proof that their work is done? Do you "admit them to confirmation" when in addition to this they say the rule? Do you oblige them to give the *wherefore* of every step? Do you compel them to become so far imbued with the spirit and sense of the process as to readily suggest from their own minds an obvious and natural problem in that process? Do you give them such a comprehension of the matter, that when called upon for the "rule" they shall rather describe what they have done, than repeat the set phrases of books? In the present state of text-books, do you feel often as if you could do better without than with them? If not, if this is the way you instruct, dear teacher, we know not how much occasion the good genius of education will have to thank you for your labor. We fear that your work will not be to your praise hereafter.

But how shall we teach? We reply, *thoroughly*. From the time the pupil begins to climb the columns of Addition, unto the extraction of the Roots, everything that is attempted should be thoroughly accomplished. This does not imply, however, that everything is to be attempted. Many things are true which are not necessarily to be learned. If one were perfectly to acquire everything that is connected with and suggested by the simplest processes of Arithmetic, we should not graduate in the fundamental rules in a much longer time than was spent in the siege of Troy. Some teachers have much information to communicate, many properties of numbers, many modes of proving division, of explaining multiplication of fractions, and the like; and seem to think that inducting pupils into all these particulars is necessarily implied in *thoroughness*. But such is not our faith; if one knew of forty ways of abbreviating or performing simple subtraction, and should lecture his pupils without cessation for a week on that subject, he would not in our opinion be so *thorough* as if he taught them *one* method and made them so clearly understand it by much practice, that they never could be at fault in the use of it. One thing well learned is worth a hundred things poorly learned.

Our sentiment is, that it is better to teach a few modes of accomplishing given results, (*one* mode is generally better,)

and then compel pupils to understand that like a familiar tale. There is no little folly practised nowadays of this kind; pupils are made to understand things by "the hearing of the ear," and then they are copiously questioned, and if they appear to be convinced of the veracity of the teacher by making a sign for *yes* and *no* at the right points, they are admitted to farther progress. There is nothing so deceptive. The tricks of ignorance to hide itself are endless. The *only way* to ascertain whether or not a pupil understands a matter, is to let him *say it* or *do it*. Is he greatly shocked at the insinuation that he does not understand Simple Addition? Confront him with the task. So long as his problems consist of digits two layers deep, he may give evidence of good training; but give him a column of figures as tall and populous as a leger, forty digits high, and let him try his speed and accuracy with a regular accountant; or in other words, let him do just what he will need to do in his future business; and how many of the little boys of Massachusetts, whom their teachers permitted to see the very end of the "roots" last winter, could climb to the top without stumbling? We presume not many.

This will give you, fellow teachers, an idea of what every boy should be able to do; that is, he should be qualified to perform rapidly and accurately every process in which you have professed to instruct him, and be able to give the reason of every step that he takes, from beginning to end. Such training will require much determination and force on the part of the teacher, and much repetition and an almost endless passing to and fro by the pupil, over every step of the difficult process, unaided by the instructor, yet under his watchful eye. When a small amount of progress has been made it should be reviewed again and again. And in these reviews it will be found very profitable to request the pupil to furnish his own examples and then solve them unaided by prompting or question.

The result of our experience is, that books can be but little relied upon in teaching this subject; at least we know of no book we should be willing to follow implicitly, even through a single topic. Take, for instance, the subject of Fractions; certainly among the most important. We know of few books where it seems to stand forth in its true simplicity and order; it is much "chopped up" in most treatises. We think that the experienced teacher at least would do well to arrange the topics for himself, and we presume to say that few of even a little mathematical taste will attempt it without perceiving that they can somewhat improve upon most books. Having fixed upon what topics you will consider, and in what order, have your classes follow that order, making use of the book only so far as it will aid you; perhaps for the problems; perhaps also for the

explanation, unless you can devise better; but not for the "rule"; the pupil can better make his own rule. Arithmetics would be greatly improved, if they had fewer and less artificial rules. The rule was designed to be merely an *expression* of the reason; the pupil soon magnifies it into *the* reason itself; as the crucifix and image were designed to be merely *aids* to worship; but the ignorant Catholic, by a wicked perversion, soon makes them the *objects* of worship.

We in our school-room have such a system of topics extending through such portions of the subject of Arithmetic as we choose to consider. It coincides with our text-book about as often as the grade of a modern railroad coincides with the original surface of the earth. It digs down what is too high, and about as often fills up what is too low. At whatever place pupils commence, we expect that they will pursue this order. Hence they become familiar with it, and can often repeat it, though we care little about that. This re-arrangement will enable one to reduce a great number of "dislocations" in Arithmetic, and bring topics that are akin to each other back into the same neighborhood from their long wanderings. For instance, Insurance and Commission, and Brokerage and Worth of Stock, and many more processes evidently come under the head of Percentage, and should be treated of there. But they are scattered about most modern treatises on no discoverable principle. They seem like dislocated strata, and wandering boulders of rock, after some mundane catastrophe. Issue a writ of "*habeas corpus*" for Brokerage and Profit and Loss, and restore them to their mourning relatives. Send out an "exploring expedition" for Present Worth, and when found, drift it back again to its anchorage in Interest, under the process for "finding the principal, when time, rate per cent. and amount are given," where it belongs.

When Sophocles, the Greek poet, was accused of madness, he read to the judges one of his tragedies to prove his sanity, and was acquitted. We do not think that it would avail much for the authors of most modern Arithmetics to read one of their books under like circumstances.

As to the mode of recitation we will add a remark. We wish pupils to have a definite lesson, and have that well prepared. It will consist usually of problems from the book, or of a review, which is frequently to be carried on with extemporaneous problems. We wish all to recite at each meeting if possible, but not in any discoverable order. We wish to have the record of the class before us. One pupil is called upon, and such and such problem assigned; we would have him take it to the black-board and commence; if he fails or falters, we would not have him consume longer time, but be seated; so if a pupil is

ready, and everything is prompt, we would stop him when in full progress, and call upon another in a different part of the class to take his place, and proceed from the point where he ceased; and so on. Perhaps a half dozen pupils may thus participate in the labor of performing one problem, all called up unexpectedly and thus kept on the alert; each one giving, perhaps, as satisfactory assurance of his state of preparation, as if they individually had dragged their slow length through a whole problem. We expect in this way to know respecting the lesson of each one, and to have each one *marked* accordingly. When this is done our principal work is done for that session. If the marks average too low at the end of the week or two weeks, individuals so designated must accelerate their speed or be sent down to a lower class till they find their level. If any part of the recitation goes wrong, a gentle rapping upon the desk should generally be sufficient to recall the wanderer; if the pupil corrects his mistake readily, it should detract little from the record of his recitation; "to err is human;" but if he cannot recover, another should be called up.

Then as to the mode of preparation for the succeeding recitation, we will venture a word; not a little will depend on that. Perhaps we may assign an additional topic for the morrow, as, for instance, "to divide one fraction by another," in such case we would by all means step to the board ourselves and demonstrate to the class that process by means of an example, and repeat the difficult parts of the work again and again, giving the rule at the close; so none shall use that common excuse of ignorance that they never saw it done! We would for a portion of the next exercise, name a number of original examples, illustrating the subject of the next lesson, as also previous rules. Constant repetition in this way is the life of thorough teaching. It will be well if the teacher has a fund of examples for this use, not accessible to the class; but if not, it will not be difficult to name them extemporaneously. Nor will it be difficult to determine whether they are correctly wrought. If they are actually performed in recitation, it will of course appear. If not, the concurrence of even two individuals, who have had no collusion, will render the correctness of an answer very certain; they may agree in the truth, but probably will not in an error. We much prefer problems proposed to a class in this way, as there are no answers to guide the pupil; they savor much more of the business of future life than any printed questions can.

We have said nothing of Mental Arithmetic. We do not forget it. They are truly fortunate who have been well trained in it, and the teacher is truly fortunate, whose pupils thus bear the impress of a master's hand. We feel a great partiality for Warren Colburn and his little book. We know not what his

successors and imitators have done, but that little treatise seems to hold on its way with increasing claims to our respect, like King James's version of the Scriptures, "appointed to be read in all the churches." The venerated author should have a monument; all New England should "give bonds" in marble and brass, that he be not soon forgotten. It is said that at the base of Monument Mountain in Berkshire, consecrated by the muse of Bryant, is a pile of stones, fancied to be the memorial of some copper-colored maiden of the forest who for very love died on that spot. The tradition is that it was raised in this way: every Indian that passed, threw a stone on to the pile. If every child in New England who has been benefited by the Mental Arithmetic we speak of, were thus to throw a stone, though no larger than a pebble, Mr. Colburn would soon have a monument, only smaller than Monument Mountain itself.

We do not know that we are indebted solely to this Arithmetic for the mode of solving problems by Analysis; yet in our younger days we knew of no such mode. Problems in Proportion were only solved by proportion; in Compound Proportion, by compound proportion; in Partnership, by the rule; "As the whole stock is to each man's share of the stock, so is the whole gain to each man's share of the gain;" and so with other processes. But, thanks to the progress of improvement, we now know of a better way.

Many problems are more easily solved by Analysis than by the "Rule." For instance, in Proportion or Compound Proportion, how much easier to obtain the answer by the method we speak of, than to invoke the aid of a "statement," as we were formerly taught. In many portions of Arithmetic, the method adopted in almost any treatise, is the method by Analysis; none simpler can well be devised; as in many processes in Fractions, in Decimals and Interest. But where such is not the case, as in the Proportions and Partnership, the pupil should be made *first* to solve every example by the Analytical mode, and then in the common way. He will thus pay homage to the truth, after that to the device of book-makers. Problems in Compound Proportion should be wrought by Analysis, then by Simple Proportion, and lastly by Compound Proportion. If pupils are taught to perceive the difference between Simple and Compound Proportion, and convert problems in Simple into Compound by annexing conditions, and then solve them in the several ways we have spoken of, Compound Proportion will be found to be a portion of Arithmetic, than which for discipline none better can be found.

We have extended these remarks to an unexpected length. In asking you, dear teacher, your mode of teaching Arithmetic, we have unintentionally fallen into the egotism of telling you our

own. We regard the subject an exceedingly important one, perhaps inferior to none. If we have impressed the idea of its importance more deeply upon any mind, we shall feel satisfied. We would here and everywhere seek to convey the idea that in teaching the mathematics, and especially Arithmetic, there will be need of all our energy and patience. We have the innate sluggishness of the pupil to overcome; we have to struggle with the force of long established and vicious habits; the most difficult part of education is to *unlearn* what has been learned wrong. What we would accomplish, cannot be accomplished at once. We must not expect to get through the book in one term, or two; what the pupils do not understand to-day let them consider to-morrow; on the next day let it "pass to a third reading." We must wear the channels of thought deep, and impress our pupils with the thought that their progress does not depend on how *much* they learn, but how *well* they learn.

Resident Editors' Table.

GEORGE ALLEN, Jr., Boston, } RESIDENT EDITORS. { ELBRIDGE SMITH, Cambridge.
C. J. CAPEN, Dedham, } { E. S. STEARNS, W. Newton.

We copy, with pleasure, from the Springfield Daily Republican, the following notice of a very valuable pamphlet, reassuring our readers of what we have before stated, that the lecture referred to *should be read by every teacher*. It may be found in the volume of Transactions lately published by the Massachusetts Teachers' Association. This, with the other able lectures in the volume, makes a book which will prove highly acceptable and useful to the teacher. It may be obtained of the publisher of "The Massachusetts Teacher," 16 Devonshire Street.

A LECTURE ON SCHOOL GOVERNMENT. By Ariel Parish, Principal of the High School, Springfield. Boston: Press of George Coolidge, and sold at all the Springfield book stores.

This essay, on a most important subject, was delivered at Worcester, in 1846, at the second annual meeting of the Massachusetts State Teachers' Association. Our only wonder, in looking over this admirable document, arises from the fact that it has slept for nine years unused. It briefly covers the whole ground of school government, and, from beginning to end, the writer gives evidence that the lesson he inculcates was learned by him in the school of experience—that he has no hobbies to ride, and no preëstablished theories to support. The book is keen-sighted, judicious, and practical, and we commend its pages.

JOHN A. GOODWIN, ESQ., formerly of Westerly, R. I., and lately editor of the Lawrence Courier, has been elected Superintendent of Schools in Lawrence.

WESTBORO' REFORM SCHOOL. Mr. Talcott, late Superintendent of the Reform School at Providence, has assumed the duties of the office of Superintendent of the Reform School at Westboro', in place of Mr. Lincoln resigned.

JONATHAN TENNEY, Esq., has resigned his place as Principal of Pittsfield High School, where his salary was \$1000 per annum, and accepted the same office, with the same salary, in the High School in the city of MANCHESTER, N. H. A valuable gold-headed cane and a fine set of "Webster's Works," in 6 vols., 8vo, are among the pleasing testimonials of affection and esteem which he takes with him as presents from his pupils in Berkshire.

Mr. T. has been a Teacher in this State about four years; and returns to New Hampshire, where he had previously taught five years, in obedience to a sense of duty to his many strong personal and educational friends in that State, who have been for some time soliciting him to do so.

NORFOLK CO. TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION.

THE next Semiannual Meeting of the Norfolk County Teachers' Association will be held at Chemung Hall, Stoughton, on Thursday and Friday, the 9th and 10th of June.

Lectures will be delivered by Rev. Nathaniel Hall, of Dorchester, and by Mr. Slafter, Principal of the High School in Dedham, and Mr. Rolfe, Principal of the High School, Dorchester.

A full attendance of the friends of education is earnestly solicited.

THE PLYMOUTH CO. TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

WILL hold its Seventh Semiannual Meeting in Loring Hall, at Hingham, on Friday and Saturday, the 10th and 11th of June current.

Lectures will be delivered by Gideon F. Thayer, Esq., of Boston, Rev. J. P. Terry, of South Weymouth, and Rev. Augustus R. Pope, of Somerville. Hon. Horace Mann is expected to be present. The time between lectures will be occupied in discussion.

A. G. BOYDEN, *Secretary pro tem.*

A Teachers' Institute will be held at Nantucket, August 1st—6th, 1853.